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LOYOLA UNIVERSITY CHICAGO

A CRT ANALYSIS OF TEACH LIKE A CHAMPION 2.0

A THESIS SUBMITTED TO
THE FACULTY OF THE GRADUATE SCHOOL
IN CANDIDACY FOR THE DEGREE OF
MASTER OF ARTS

PROGRAM IN CULTURAL AND EDUCATIONAL POLICY STUDIES

BY
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CHICAGO, IL

MAY 2019

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the people who supported me in the development of this thesis. A special thanks to my advisor, Dr. Kate Phillippo, for her continuous support and guidance throughout the research process. Your counsel throughout my graduate school experience has helped me develop as a critical thinker and educator. To my thesis committee members, Dr. Noah Sobe and Dr. Bridget Turner Kelly, thank you for your thoughtful feedback and invaluable insights. I would also like to extend my thanks to my professors and classmates in the Cultural and Educational Policy Studies department for their mentorships and friendships. Last but not least, I would like to thank my husband, Patrick, for his encouragement, support, and belief in my ability to grow as a writer and researcher.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	iii
ABSTRACT	v
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION	1
Problem Statement	5
Conceptual Framework	6
Review of Literature	8
Research Questions	15
CHAPTER TWO: STUDY DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY	16
Research Methodology	16
Data Collection and Analysis	17
Validity	20
Positionality	20
CHAPTER THREE: RESULTS	24
Assimilation to White Culture	24
Turning Students Into Scholars	29
Compliance and Adherence to Authority	34
Surveillance and Control	38
CHAPTER FOUR: CONCLUSION	45
Discussion	45
Limitations	47
Implications	48
Conclusion	51
APPENDIX A: DOCUMENT ANALYSIS PROTOCOL	53
BIBLIOGRAPHY	55
VITA	59

ABSTRACT

African American and Latinx students in the United States continue to academically perform at lower levels than their White peers as indicated by standardized testing results. While many educational efforts have attempted to close the achievement gap that exists between White students and students of Color, disparities in academic outcomes persist. The prominent discourse regarding the achievement gap emphasizes cultural deficiencies within the individual student rather than acknowledge structural and institutional factors that uphold systemic racism and White supremacy. As a result, many new instructional approaches and teaching techniques used in schools and teacher preparation programs focus on correcting the perceived deficiencies of students of Color.

Doug Lemov's *Teach Like a Champion 2.0: 62 Techniques That Put Students on the Path to College* (TLaC 2.0) is a burgeoning teaching guide that promotes techniques intended to close the achievement gap. The instructional guide emphasizes a set taxonomy with strategies for teachers to replicate in their classrooms, and is utilized by many teacher training and educator professional development programs. This study uses document analysis research to examine TLaC 2.0 through a lens informed by Critical Race Theory. An examination of the language used within TLaC 2.0 provides further insights as to the techniques and strategies used to prepare educators in closing the achievement gap. Moreover, the findings of this study offer evidence of deficit ideology perpetuated within teacher education and professional development programs.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

The composition of classrooms in the United States continues to grow more diverse both in ethnic and linguistic make-up (Ullucci, 2010). Conversely, America's teaching force remains comprised of mostly White, middle-class females (Sleeter, 2017). Brown (2014) explained that classrooms in America continue to experience a "sustained and growing mismatch between the background and experiences of aspiring and preparing teachers and the larger K-12 student population in which these teachers will serve" (p. 326). The cultural mismatch that exists between teachers and students of Color can become problematic if left unaddressed within teacher preparation and educator development and, further, result in "a significant detachment of White teacher educators and White teacher education students from children of color" (Cross, 2003, p. 204). When cultural differences are left un-interrogated, they have the potential to be perceived negatively by White teachers and result in a view of racial difference that is deficit-based (Watson, 2012). A developed deficit-based lens, consequently, results in teachers disserving and devaluing students of Color.

Although the cultural mismatch between students and teachers within education remains minimized within educational discourse, racial difference in regards to the achievement gap between students of Color and their White counterparts continues to be a highly discussed topic. Wixom (2015) explained, "Below-par achievement of minority and economically disadvantaged students remains one of the most concerning problems in education" (p. 1). The relentless focus

within education on closing the achievement gap has significantly impacted teacher interactions and perceptions of students. The cultural mismatch between teachers and students further exacerbates educator assumptions. And rather than acknowledge the institutional and systemic factors that contribute to the gap in achievement, educational discourse remains focused on “‘at-risk’ youth from ‘broken’ homes whose ‘culture of poverty’ impedes them from ‘making it’” (Gorski, 2009, p. 156).

In response to the growing focus on achievement gap discourse, teacher preparation programs have begun considering how to best prepare educators to advance the academic outcomes of students of Color. Delpit (2006) noted, “Teacher education usually focuses on research that links failure and socioeconomic status, failure and cultural difference, and failure and single-parent households” (p. 172). Subsequently, many teacher education programs and professional development opportunities support increasing the achievement of students of Color by adopting specific techniques that mitigate the perceived cultural deficits linked to academic failure. Though not always overt in connecting academic performance to perceived racial deficits, many techniques and programs that aim to increase the academic outcomes of students of Color convey deficit-based assumptions regarding cultural and racial differences. As the goal of schooling has narrowed its focus to boosting standardized test scores and college admissions rates, pedagogical techniques intended to target these outcomes have gained prominence in the training of teachers through teacher preparation programs and educator professional development (Golann, 2015).

One such program adopted by many pre-service teacher programs, as well as several district and school-wide professional development programs, is Doug Lemov's (2015) *Teach Like a Champion 2.0: 62 Techniques That Put Students on the Path to College*—also referred to as TLaC 2.0 (Golann, 2015). Lemov's TLaC 2.0 is best described as “a set of frameworks and practices that aim to close the achievement gap in standardized test performance” (Lamboy & Lu, 2017). Numerous charter and public schools, university teacher preparation programs, alternative teacher certification programs, and school district professional development departments utilize TLaC 2.0 to inform teacher pedagogy. Prominent users of Lemov's TLaC 2.0 methodology include the Relay Graduate School of Education, Teach for America's summer training program, The Houston Independent School District, Uncommon School Network of Charter Schools, and the New York's Partnership Schools organization (Golann, 2018; Lemov, 2015; Schneider, 2013).

Published in its 1.0 version in 2010, *Teach Like a Champion* quickly became popularized within education reform movement for its standardized set of teaching practices and common language used to describe pedagogical techniques deemed effective in closing the achievement gap. Lemov's TLaC 2.0 program provides descriptive techniques and standardized terminology used for the coaching and development of pre-service and veteran teachers alike. The uniqueness of Lemov's approach, which heavily focuses on the taxonomy and vocabulary used to describe his teaching practices, led to the popularity of his instructional guide. In an era where standardized test scores increasingly became a central focus of schooling, teacher preparation programs and schools craved quick, efficient approaches to train cohorts of teachers to advance the academic outcomes of students. In fact, Green (2014) referred to *Teach Like a Champion* at

the time as “the structure that the United States had never had—a system focusing on helping teachers learn” (p. 194). Lemov’s champion techniques, as determined from his observations of teachers primarily within “no-excuses” charter schools (Hollabaugh, 2011), were swiftly embraced by the education reform movement, and gradually spread into the training and development programs of teachers among the broader education community.

In his second edition, which added thirteen new teaching techniques, Lemov used the achievement gap to justify the utilization of his techniques to target the academic improvement of low-income students. Lemov explained that TLaC 2.0 is “about the tools necessary for success in the most important part of the field: teaching in public schools, primarily those in the inner city, that serve students born to poverty and, too often, to a rapidly closing window of opportunity” (p. 2). He added that the focus of his instructional guide was to provide a “common vocabulary” (p. 4) for those within the field of education to refer to and replicate in order to close the achievement gap. His new approach to instruction and pedagogy emphasized student recall, test-taking strategies, and procedural mastery. Lamboy and Lu (2017) explained that the types of practices endorsed by Lemov are “not typical in affluent suburban classrooms and when used are often challenged by parents who are privy to the decades of research showing that such practices generally fail to develop student self-determination and independent learning” (p. 215). Though such practices were often deemed inadequate, or even inappropriate, for more affluent students, Lemov’s techniques became lauded by many educators as quick and efficient tools to remedy gaps in student testing outcomes for low-income students.

Problem Statement

Despite the widespread popularity of Lemov's TLaC 2.0, there is little evidence to support the success of the practices and techniques promoted within his book. While Lemov's introduction offers an analysis of student performance data—as indicated by state test scores—to define the success of his techniques, formal research has yet been conducted to support the program's efficacy. The shortage in evidence to support TLaC 2.0's performance reflects a larger gap within educational research regarding the implications of instructional techniques and classroom management strategies that intend to increase the academic outcomes of students of Color (Goldstein, 2012). Although recent studies have revealed evidence of negative social and emotional implications of techniques used in no-excuse charter schools, researchers have yet to analyze the strategies specific to those promoted in TLaC 2.0. Golann and Torres (2018) noted, "Evaluations of no-excuses schools typically do not distinguish between their different practices" (p. 5), thus making it difficult to define which strategies were analyzed in their effectiveness or lack thereof. Consequently, a gap in research exists in examining TLaC 2.0's distinct techniques and both the academic and non-academic implications that may exist.

While this research does not focus on the specific academic outcomes that result from utilizing the TLaC 2.0 program, this study examines the racial undertones that undergird Lemov's taxonomy and the implications for both students and educators. This study aims to strengthen the current literature on racialized deficit perspectives within schooling by focusing on the particular language utilized by Lemov. The results contribute to the current gap in literature regarding broader social implications that result from pedagogical techniques aimed to mitigate academic disparities between White students and students of Color. This study

specifically focuses on the language and taxonomy that Lemov distinctly emphasized to relay his techniques to teachers. The purpose of this research is to develop further insight into the terminology used to describe pedagogical techniques that intend to close the achievement gap and consider how language may perpetuate the cultural deficit paradigm.

Given the current composition of the teaching force in comparison to the constantly changing demographics of the U.S. classroom, the analysis of TLaC 2.0's vocabulary assists in advancing the current understanding of instructional approaches used by White educators that intend to close the achievement gap. Through the use of document analysis methodology in the examination of Lemov's *Teach Like a Champion 2.0: 62 Techniques That Put Students on the Path to College*, this study provides information that contributes to the understanding of racialized deficit ideology within pre-service teacher programs and educator professional development. Additionally, this study offers possible implications regarding the cultural awareness of White educators and student perceptions of schooling that may result from Lemov's TLaC 2.0 taxonomy.

Conceptual Framework

Institutional racism, supported by White supremacist ideology, shapes a deficit perspective of students of Color. Yosso (2005) noted that a deficit paradigm continues to be “one of the most prevalent forms of contemporary racism in U.S. schools” (p. 75). Given the centrality of racism within deficit ideology, this study draws upon the core tenets of Critical Race Theory (CRT) to guide the textual analysis of TLaC 2.0. The CRT framework—often ignored in current achievement gap discourse—grounds this study's findings in the reality of the inherent structural racism present in the U. S. Further, CRT offers an opportunity to examine the ways in which

inequitable structures are maintained and perpetuated within institutions such as schools and provides a theoretical foundation to challenge structures defined by race and White dominance (Sleeter, 2017).

CRT was pioneered by Tate and Ladson-Billings (1995) as a framework to examine racial inequity within education and interrogate the structural racism that persists within schools. Lynn and Parker (2006) defined the contemporary use of CRT as “a critique of racism as a system of oppression and exploitation that explores the historic and contemporary constructions and manifestations of race in our society with particular attention to how these issues are manifested in schools” (p. 282). CRT supported the purpose of this study in that it not only provided a lens to confront a deficit narrative, but also provided an opportunity to build upon literature that emphasizes the cultural strength, or cultural wealth, of communities of color (Yosso, 2005). The framework also allowed for a precise focus on race and racial intersectionality to investigate the language used in TLaC 2.0 and provided a focus to consider if such strategies perpetuate racial inequity within schools, teacher preparation programs, and discourse within the broader field of education. Moreover, CRT offered a structural and cultural perspective of race (Solorzano, 1997) that informed the research process in analyzing the effects of a discourse rooted in a racialized deficit paradigm.

In order to investigate the classroom techniques aimed at improving the academic outcomes of what Lemov referred to as “impoverished” and “inner-city” students, it was imperative to interrogate the description his instructional practices through a critical lens. CRT maintains that many of the approaches or techniques aimed towards students of Color are rooted in a view of deficiencies that suggest students ought to be altered or controlled by teachers and

administrators (Ladson-Billings, 1998). While such instructional practices may not utilize vocabulary that overtly references to students of Color as deficient, coded language often emerges as deficit-based. For example, Yosso and Solorzano (2002) explained, “Given the current rhetoric of ‘at-risk’ and the resurrection of terms such as *disadvantaged*, it is clear that just as insidiously as racism has changed forms, so has the cultural deficit terminology used by social scientists” (p. 133). A central component of this study focused on the examination of whether TLaC’s language was influenced by a deficit perspective. Subsequently, CRT provided an appropriate lens to determine if Lemov’s terminology was rooted in a racialized deficit ideology.

Review of Literature

The deficit paradigm positions students and families of Color as deficient of, or lacking, dominant forms of capital deemed necessary for academic, personal, and professional success (Yosso, 2005). With a specific focus on education and schooling, a deficit perspective assumes that the academic disparities between White students and students of Color, otherwise referred to as the achievement gap, results in direct response to student and parent shortcomings. Gorski (2009) explained, “deficit thinking emerges when we mistake difference—particularly difference from ourselves—for deficit” (p. 2) and, thus, align cultural differences to cultural weaknesses. The assumed cultural weaknesses are perceived by the deficit paradigm as resulting from individual inadequacy, subsequently omitting social factors that influence racial inequity (Weiner, 2006). Further, a racialized deficit paradigm assumes negative perceptions of the academic proficiencies of students of Color by correlating cultural and racial practices that

deviate from White normative ideology as behaviors that contribute to widening the achievement gap.

A deficit perspective significantly influences the instructional practices taught to, and practiced by, educators and pre-service teachers. As the gap in achievement—as measured by standardized testing—between students of Color and White students continues to broaden, a focus on increasing student achievement and closing the racial gap remains a top priority both for policymakers and teachers. Educators have adopted instructional philosophies influenced by phrases such as “all students can learn” and “high expectation for all students” (Mayfield & Garrison-Wade, 2015). Such slogans root themselves within the perceived deficiencies of students of Color, emphasizing the will of the individual rather than accounting for the social and structural factors that maintain inequity. Consequently, teacher development and pre-service teacher programs adopt techniques that target the perceived deficiencies of students of Color in order to increase achievement. Ladson-Billings (1998) explained, “Classroom teachers are engaged in a never-ending quest for ‘*the* right strategy or technique’ to deal with (read: control) ‘at-risk’ (read: African American) students” (p. 25). Likewise, as teachers, administrators, and teacher preparation programs continue to combat academic disparities in response to perceived racial deficiencies, broader issues of White dominance and structural inequities remain ever-present within the American classroom.

Many new instructional practices that intend to increase the academic achievement of students of Color emphasize race without blatantly using racial language. Rather, words such as urban, inner-city, low-income, and impoverished are used to indicate practices that covertly target African American and Latinx students. Yosso (2005) asserted, “As part of the challenge to

deficit thinking in education, it should be noted that race is often coded as ‘cultural difference’ in schools” (p. 75). While Lemov’s pedagogical techniques may not overtly reference race, there is a clear focus on closing the achievement gap between “low-income, “inner-city” students and their more affluent counterparts. This coded language, suggests that the techniques are intended to increase the academic outcomes of Black and Latinx students in reaching similar outcomes of White students. Without openly identifying race and racial differences, Lemov is able to silence racial discourse, but also use coded language to target students of Color in his TLaC 2.0 techniques.

Coded language protects the perpetuation of racists thoughts and actions through the avoidance of race-based language. Racially coded language often emboldens people to make racist assumptions with a shield that allows them to not be perceived as racist (Bush, 2004; Castago, 2008). Subsequently, beliefs about race in relation to academic proficiency can be made without explicitly naming race to justify such conclusions (Buendía, Ares, Juarez & Peercy, 2004). Castagno (2008) explained that racially coded language is specifically problematic within education because “first, it hides the reproductive practices in which schools engage related to race and inequity; and second, it allows educators to believe that they are not differentiating education based on deficit models of students’ racial identity” (p. 321). Consequently, pedagogical decisions can be made under the guise of color-blindness, while also making distinct decisions based on race through hidden codes (Buendía et al., 2004).

The use of racially coded language within education preserves the silencing of racial discourse among educators and pre-service teachers alike. The silencing of race through coded language “perpetuate(s) an educational culture in which inequities are ignored, the status quo is

maintained, and Whiteness is both protected and entrenched” (Castagno, 2008, p. 314). Further, scholars argue that in order to deconstruct dominant ideology and a deficit perspective, educators and pre-service teachers need to engage in discussions about race and White supremacy (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995; Sleeter, 2001; Ullucci, 2010). However, when race is silenced or skirted through the use of racially coded language, this discourse is unable to occur. Subsequently, racial silencing and coded language “hide reproduction of inequality, allow educators to believe they are not using deficit models, [and] reinforce multiple oppressions through reinforcing white privilege,” (Young, 2016, p. 86)

While the silencing of racial discourse within education remains a significant factor in maintaining deficit ideology within schools, the instructional practices taught to educators and pre-service teachers also continue to emphasize the need to “fix” students of Color. In describing strategies used to mitigate the gap in achievement between White student and student of Color, Gorski (2009) noted, “This is the surest sign of deficit ideology: the suggestion that we fix inequalities by fixing disenfranchised communities rather than that which disenfranchises them” (p. 156). The focus remains on fixing the behaviors of students of Color—often by aligning to White normative ideology—in order to raise student test scores. Through the continuation of promoting instructional practices rooted in White dominance, deficit ideology advances within schools. For example, many charter schools continue to encourage pedagogical techniques that focus on individual and environmental regulation to control and fix the perceived deficiencies of students of Color (Goodman, 2013). Thus, in addition to the silencing of race through coded language, the use of instructional practices that seek to remedy perceived racialized deficiencies of students of Color without overtly referencing race also uphold and protect White dominance.

Schools often utilize specific practices with the intention of increasing the academic achievement of African American and Latinx students. While laudable in that teachers and schools recognize the inequitable outcomes that exist between students of Color and White students, the instructional practices used often rely upon correcting and reconstructing what is perceived to be lacking in the behavior and character of students of Color (Cross, 2003). These pedagogical techniques often target the development of student perseverance, attentiveness, grit, and a myriad of other character traits that are perceived to be missing competencies of students of Color (Goodman, 2013). Morris (2005) wrote, “Schools require a different set of skills and knowledge, which poor and minority students are often seen to lack... the forms of cultural capital useful in poor and minority communities often become impediments in the school context” (p. 26). Therefore, White dominant behavioral expectations are reinforced as normative cultural assets and, further, utilized to target the perceived deficiencies of students of Color.

In response to the growing focus on increasing the standardized test scores particularly of students of Color, practitioners began developing packaged instructional practices and classroom management guides claiming to reduce the size of the achievement gap. Lee Canter, Fred Jones, and Doug Lemov are examples of prominent practitioners who developed workshops, books, and other forms of teacher resources promoting pedagogical techniques targeting the achievement gap (Goodman, 2013). Each developed variations of instructional practices intended to improve the academic outcomes of students on the lowest end of the achievement gap—mostly Black and Latinx students—and adjust their skill sets and behaviors to align more closely to their higher performing counterparts—mostly White, affluent students—in order to increase their academic proficiency (Milner, 2008). Most of the promoted practices emphasize the deficiencies of the

individual rather than acknowledge broader racial institutional factors that lead to inequity. Hence, within programs that adopted this view based on individualized shortcomings, success equated to White dominant behavioral norms and failure correlated to a lack of will on behalf of minority students.

Smeyers and Depaepe (2016) asserted, “America’s achievement gap is the goal that minority and poor children need to achieve as their majority and more privileged peers” (p. 140). Reformers believe that in order to close the achievement gap, the responsibility falls upon the teachers to fix individual deficiencies regardless of larger societal factors (Smeyers & Depaepe, 2016). TLaC 2.0 is specifically defined as a book that provides a “tool box for closing the achievement gap” (Lemov, 2015, p. 3). Lemov described his guide as a set of techniques for novice and veteran teachers who work in the “inner-city” and “serve students born to poverty” (p. 2). This coded racial language provides further insight into the overall goals of TLaC 2.0 in promoting instructional practices targeting students of Color. While race is never explicitly referred to in TLaC 2.0, Lemov’s introduction offers coded language such as “urban districts” and “closing the achievement gap” that suggests an intention of improving the educational outcomes of Black and Latinx students.

Educational scholars have stressed the importance of culturally informed instruction—such as culturally responsive pedagogy (CRP) and multicultural educational curricula—in developing a more inclusive approach to teaching that draws upon the cultural wealth of students (Ladson-Billings, 1995; Sleeter, 2001; Gorsky, 2009). These culture-oriented approaches to pedagogy developed largely in response to scholarly recommendations addressing the cultural mismatch between teachers and students (Sleeter, 2017). CRP and multicultural education

increase the cultural awareness of educators and pre-service teachers in order to provide a more equitable educational experience for Black and Latinx students. These race-oriented approaches to education acknowledge cultural differences as positive resources in informing instruction and attempt to dismantle a deficit ideology within education by building upon these strengths and validating student culture. Aronson and Laughter (2016) described the significant impact of incorporating culturally relevant education (CRE) practices noting “research demonstrates that the engagement of CRE across the content areas resulted in positive increases in academic skills and concepts” (p. 196). In making race and culture an intentional focus of CRE practices such as CRP and multicultural education, educators are able to positively impact the academic outcomes of students of Color.

TLaC 2.0 distinctly differs from CRP and multicultural teaching practices in that race is not clearly identified by Lemov as an element used to inform the instructional techniques described in his guide. Rather, TLaC 2.0 targets Black and Latinx students using racially coded language, promoting techniques intended to “catch up” student of Color with their White peers. Unlike culturally relevant education approaches, TLaC 2.0 does not draw upon the cultural strengths of students of Color to increase student outcomes. Instead, Lemov offers techniques to align student behavior and performance closer to that of White normative ideology in order to advance the standardized test scores of Black and Latinx students. A pedagogical program that does not build upon the cultural strengths of students of Color may indicate a racialized deficit ideology when instructional practices intend to recondition perceived student deficiencies. When racial difference is viewed as a contributing factor to academic shortcomings, a pedagogical program may signal a deficit perspective towards communities of Color (Groski, 2009). Thus, a

pedagogical program, such as Lemov's TLaC 2.0, may present a racialized deficit ideology when deviations from dominant normative behavior, defined by Whiteness, are considered a threat to academic success.

Research Questions

The reviewed literature of the racial deficit paradigm, coded language, and instructional practices targeting the achievement gap raises the question of how newer approaches to pedagogy based on closing the achievement gap may promote a racially deficit ideology. Lemov's current prevalence within teacher preparation programs and educator professional development leads to the following question: What evidence of racialized deficit language is present in *Teach Like a Champion 2.0* when analyzed through a Critical Race Theoretical lens? The following sub-questions guiding this research offered a strategic focus on racially coded language and deficit-based terminology rooted in cultural and individualized deficiencies:

1. In what ways is race coded or silenced in the terminology used to explain Lemov's instructional techniques?
2. To what extent do the techniques use language that suggests a perception of cultural deficiency?

CHAPTER TWO

STUDY DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

This study examined evidence of racially coded language and deficit ideology within Lemov's most recent 2.0 iteration of *Teach Like a Champion*. At the time that this research was conducted, Lemov's TLaC 2.0 strategies were promoted by many teacher preparation programs, alternative teacher certification programs, as well as school and district-wide professional development programs. This research used qualitative research methods to analyze TLaC 2.0 taxonomy through a CRT lens, examining Lemov's text for indications of a racialized deficit ideology.

Research Methodology

Qualitative research methodology was used in this study to examine evidence of deficit terminology within Doug Lemov's *Teach Like a Champion 2.0: 62 Techniques That Put Students on the Path to College*. Case study research is defined as "research that provides a detailed account and analysis of one or more cases" (Johnson & Christenson, 2014, p. 434). For this study, case study analysis offered an opportunity to investigate the TLaC 2.0 text in its entirety and, further, allowed for an in-depth analysis to collect rich and descriptive data (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). The single bounded system, or case, in this study was Lemov's *Teach Like a Champion 2.0* text which served as the primary unit of analysis. The comprehensive design of the study, using qualitative methods and case study analysis, provided an opportunity to situate deficit ideology specifically within one example of a packaged

pedagogical guide for teachers. The primary goal of this research using an intrinsic case study design was to develop a detailed understanding of TLaC's terminology through a CRT lens and consider implications of other pedagogical approaches in relation to race and deficit thinking.

Consistent with the use of case study methodology, the unit of analysis for this study was defined by the single case itself. Merriam and Tisdell (2016) explained that within case study research “*one* particular program or *one* particular classroom of learners (a bounded system), or *one* particular older learner selected on the basis of typicality, uniqueness, success, and so forth, would be the unit of analysis” (p. 39). Thus, the TLaC 2.0 text represented the singular sample for this study. Purposeful sampling was used in this research, strategically examining deficit ideology within TLaC 2.0 as an instructional guide. While racialized deficit ideology as a phenomenon could have been examined in several other instructional programs aimed at closing the achievement gap, TLaC 2.0 was selected given its representative utilization of techniques typical within reform movement pedagogical practices. Additionally, the popularity of Lemov's approach—which he has been able to parlay into trainings for teachers, workshops for trainers, a fellowship, and several other books—is significant to this study in consideration of the number of educators and pre-service teachers who utilize the techniques promoted within his work.

Data Collection and Analysis

A document analysis was conducted to collect and analyze data pertaining to the study's overarching research question given its strengths in revealing underlying beliefs (Jones, Torres & Armino, 2014). Bowen (2009) described document analysis as “a process of evaluating documents in such a way that empirical knowledge is produced and understanding is developed” (p. 34). The utilization of document analysis provided the ability to examine a large collection of data

that was non-reactive to the research process and stable in response to the researcher (Bowen, 2009; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Likewise, the use of document analysis for this study allowed for an in-depth examination of TLaC 2.0 that would have otherwise taken an inordinate amount of time to collect through several iterations of interviews or observations. The examination of published text strengthened the overall goals of this study in that the researcher was able to analyze the consistent, unchanged message relayed to educators and pre-service teachers through the TLaC 2.0 book. Additionally, the consistency and fixedness of the text provided a more objective form of data collection and selection that remained unaffected by researcher influence (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016).

To further ensure the consistency of the data utilized for this study, the use of document analysis also allowed for a critical examination of the text, certifying the quality of the data collected for the study (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Merriam and Tisdell (2016) noted, “In judging the value of a data source, a researcher can ask whether it contains information or insights relevant to the research question and whether it can be acquired in a reasonably practical yet systematic manner” (p. 180). Accordingly, the TLaC 2.0 text represented a published version of an instructional approach aiming to close the achievement that was highly relevant within educator training and development. The TLaC 2.0 text was a credible and authentic document to analyze for this study given its publication by the reputable publishing company, Wiley’s Jossey-Bass, and the newest iteration of the 2.0 edition published in 2015. Furthermore, the text represented typical pedagogical strategies used by reformers particularly within charter schools and alternative teacher preparation programs.

Content analysis and thematic analysis was used to synthesize and categorize the written material within the document. Bowen (2009) described the data analysis process as an iteration of content and thematic analysis through the use of “skimming (superficial examination), reading (thorough examination), and interpretation” (p. 32). The content analysis stage established the first-review of the document and synthesized the initial organization of the text in relation to deficit ideology and the overarching research question. Subsequently, a thematic analysis of the document offered the opportunity to continuously review the initial organization of the text and identify emergent themes and categories as described by recurring patterns in the text (Bowen, 2009; Fereday & Muir-Cochrane, 2006). The combination of content and thematic analysis during the data analysis process ensured that each line of text within TLaC 2.0 was thoroughly examined for distinct evidence of deficit ideology and interpreted through a CRT lens.

Open coding was used in the content analysis stage when the TLaC 2.0 text was initially segmented and synthesized. Strategic structural coding provided the initial categories as the data was segmented and examined for common elements (Saldaña, 2016). Tenets of Critical Race Theory informed the structural codes in relation to the overarching research question which guided this study. As categories emerged through the structural coding process, thematic analysis was used to identify recurring patterns and consistent trends within the document. Overarching themes were developed in relation to the research question and theoretical framework guiding the study. The finalized themes were refined to reflect elements that expressed any evidence, or lack thereof, racialized deficit ideology within the TLaC 2.0 text.

Validity

This study used several strategies to ensure the validity and credibility of the research findings. The first strategy utilized to strengthen the trustworthiness of the research was the examination of the authenticity of the text during the data selection process. Additionally, validity was increased by using a detailed document analysis protocol (see Appendix A) during the data collection and analysis process. This study also intentionally considered evidence that could disprove initial themes or researcher expectations. Lastly, although a strength of document analysis is the stability of the data and non-reactivity to investigator influence (Bowen, 2009; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016), researcher reflexivity also remained a critical strategy throughout the data analysis process to ensure the trustworthiness of the data. In consideration of the CRT theoretical framework used to guide this study, it was essential to examine researcher positionality in relation to how potential biases could affect the examination and interpretation of the data. With specific sensitivity to power dynamics, Critical Race Theory highlights the necessity for researchers to remain “actively engaged, thoughtful, and forthright regarding tensions that can surface when conducting research where issues of race and culture are concerned” throughout the research process (Milner, 2008, p. 388). Therefore, through the use of researcher reflexivity—in addition to document authenticity and saturation—this study actively sought to mitigate potential threats to the trustworthiness and overall credibility of the research findings.

Positionality

Qualitative inquiry requires the researcher to act as the primary instrument throughout the data collection process. While research proximity can often increase the credibility of one’s

findings, it can also influence the data analysis and interpretation process as a result of researcher biases. Merriam and Tisdell (2016) explained, “the human instrument has shortcomings and biases that can have an impact on [a] study” (p. 16). Therefore, an awareness of researcher positionality through the practice of reflexivity becomes an essential component of qualitative research. As a result, it is important to shed light on the components of my personal and professional identities that may have impacted my interpretation of the data collected and analyzed for this study. Furthermore, I will outline the steps that were taken throughout the study to both interrogate and bracket my positionalities during different components of the qualitative research process.

I identify as a White, heterosexual, cisgender female who grew up in a middle-class family. I am also a former elementary school teacher and professional development leader, who taught in schools comprised of mostly low-income, Black and Latinx students. Though I studied elementary education as an undergraduate student, upon graduation I joined Teach For America (TFA) and moved away from a small town to teach in a large, urban district. As a TFA corps member and charter school educator, I was trained to utilize many of the techniques promoted by both Lee Canter and Doug Lemov. In fact, during my first year of teaching I was sent by my charter school network to several of Lemov’s Teach Like a Champion “Train-the-Trainer” workshops. Doug Lemov, himself, instructed me and a group of colleagues in how to lead and implement TLaC professional development workshops back at our school. Additionally, Lemov promoted coaching techniques that would ensure all teachers at our school site would implement his techniques with fidelity.

As a novice teacher, I initially struggled with pedagogy implementation and classroom management. Lemov's strategies gave me a sense of control over my classroom, easing my anxieties regarding standardized testing and classroom observations. The implementation of TLaC techniques made me feel as though I was actively working towards closing the achievement gap given the resulting alterations in student behavior that I was seeing in my classroom. Although it was extremely unclear if academic gains were actually being made as a result of the implementation of TLaC strategies, my charter school network lauded my efforts for advancing "classroom culture" and maintaining "high-expectations" for my students. After leading several TLaC trainings for my school and coaching other teachers to implement TLaC strategies, I left my role as a classroom teacher and joined Teach For America's regional team. As a coach for struggling first-year TFA corps members, I utilized Lemov and Canter's work to encourage student engagement and assist teachers in developing a positive, scholarly classroom culture.

I started questioning the implications of Lemov's techniques as student engagement began to feel more like compliance, and the development of classroom culture began to feel more like the encouragement of regulation and control. As a White coach teaching mostly White teachers to use Lemov's techniques with Black and Latinx students, I started to question the dynamics of race and power in the classroom. Beginning to develop my lens as a critical educator and examine my own professional framework and practices, TLaC started to feel misaligned with my beliefs about equity and education. And after leaving my role at Teach For America, and pursuing my graduate studies to advance my understanding of critical pedagogy and equity-based education, I have continued to interrogate the ways in which TLaC strategies

may exacerbate the cultural mismatch between teachers, and negatively influence minority student perceptions of schooling.

As a result of my background utilizing Lemov's strategies and shifting perspective of the equitable-nature of his practice, there are many ways in positionality could have affected the research process. In order to mitigate the effects of researcher bias, I actively looked for data that could disprove what I expected to find in the TLaC 2.0 text. Merriam and Tisdell (2016) noted that researchers may choose to increase internal validity by "purposefully seek[ing] data that might disconfirm or challenge [researcher] expectations or emergent findings" (p. 249). Given my innate biases and potential hypersensitivity to the data, I deliberately looked for alternative conclusions. In addition to seeking out data that could disprove researcher expectations, I also was mindful of how my racial identity impacted my research. I journaled throughout the research process to reflect upon how my Whiteness could have affected the interpretation of the data analyzed for this study. While my perspective as a White former teacher who taught minority students has the potential to hold biases related to race and power, I used journaling to remain cognizant of possible partialities in my analysis.

CHAPTER THREE

RESULTS

Assimilation to White Culture

Evidence of White supremacy and deficit ideology in TLaC 2.0 is revealed with consistent language that suggests the need to assimilate students to White cultural and scholarly norms. Particularly, White supremacy in TLaC 2.0 is coded under the guise of college preparedness and the socialization of students as scholars. Lemov identified academic mastery and college attendance as the ultimate goals of schooling. Academic mastery and college inform the techniques intended to socialize students to behave, speak, and write in a manner that Lemov deemed necessary for success. Further, Lemov's techniques suggest that students lack the skills, disposition, and knowledge required for schooling, and require socialization and assimilation to properly participate in school culture.

The words "socialize," "socialization," "assimilate," and "assimilation" are used throughout TLaC 2.0 to describe the implementation of Lemov's techniques intended to transform students into scholars. Lemov noted, "Students often have to learn how to be students as much as they need to learn content and skills, and the processes and practices of being a student must be assimilated by modeling" (p. 169). Behavioral expectations and scholarly conduct are two major themes that pervade the entirety of TLaC 2.0. Embedded in numerous techniques are behaviors that emphasize the need to socialize students for the classroom. These techniques outline what students should visually look at during lessons, how students should

appropriately speak to be considered scholarly, and the ideal sitting position students should assume for maximum academic productivity.

Lemov claimed that there are necessary baseline behaviors for learning that students should be expected to engage in including tracking the speaker and sitting in learning position. In Technique 47, he used the acronyms STAR and SLANT to reinforce these behaviors in the classroom. STAR stands for Sit up, Track the speaker, Ask and answer questions like a scholar, and Respect those around you; SLANT stands for Sit up, Listen, Ask and answer questions, Nod your head, and Track the speaker (p. 360). Both acronyms require students to remain fixated on the speaker, likely being the teacher, and hold an erect posture while sitting at their desks. Lemov asserted that tracking—the practice of look at the speaker—and sitting up straight maximizes student attentiveness (p. 360). The phrase, “I need to see you sitting like a scholar,” (p. 404) is suggested to the reader as a way to remind students to assume the STAR or SLANT position. This phrase relays the message to students that one’s body must be positioned in a specific way to be scholarly, ultimately impacting student perception of what a scholar looks like. Moreover, the expectation of STAR or SLANT in the classroom reinforces a deficit perspective of alternative body positions assumed while in the classroom.

Deficit ideology and White supremacy are further perpetuated through STAR and SLANT by emphasizing the need to socialize students to track individuals who are speaking. Tracking assumes that students are attentive and listening only when they are looking at the speaker. Additionally, situating the socialization of tracking as a priority-area for teachers suggests that eye-contact is a critical behavior for the academic success of students. Maintaining eye contact while listening is generally a cultural norm for Anglo European Americans,

consistent with White-dominant ideology. However, there are several cultural differences regarding norms for making, maintaining, and avoiding eye contact. Avoiding eye contact can be a sign of respect in the Latinx community, and making more direct eye contact when speaking rather than when listening is a common cultural norm in the African American community (Elliot, 1999). Therefore, when Lemov makes claims such as, “Listeners show their engagement by looking at one another” (p.317), he is discounting the nonverbal cultural norms that diverge from White-dominant ideology, and further upholding White supremacy through socialization.

In addition to Lemov’s disregard for nonverbal cultural differences, he also silences the use of language, vocabulary, and tone that does not meet the norms of White-dominant verbal communication. Beginning with audibility, Lemov used the words “mutter” and “muttered” on five separate occasions in TLaC 2.0 to describe an incorrect manner of speaking in the classroom. In Technique 14, *Format Matters*, he stressed the importance of students speaking audibly. He instructs teachers to use the cue “voice” to correct students who mutter their ideas or express themselves inaudibly, suggesting to students that there is a specific tone and way of speaking that belongs in the classroom (p. 119). Further, the prompt “voice” messages to students that there is a right and wrong way to verbally engage in the classroom, promoting a deficit perspective of speaking in a softer tone.

Technique 14 also highlights Lemov’s encouragement of socialization through the use of strategies that “help [students] practice responding in a format that communicates the worthiness of their ideas” (p. 116). Lemov explained that champion teachers correct slang, syntax, and grammar and align student language to what he refers to as the “language of opportunity” and the “language of college”. He defined the language of opportunity as “the code that signals

preparedness and proficiency to the broadest possible audience” (p. 117). Lemov also described the “language of opportunity” as the language used by professionals and scholars. He used the adjectives “articulate” and “elegant” when characterizing the language of college, and further described it as “better language” (p. 122). Technique 14 promotes the “language of opportunity” by emphasizing the need for students to alter the way they speak, or code-switch, in order to be considered scholarly. TLaC 2.0 encourages teachers to value a certain grammatical format which ultimately devalues students when they deviate from Standard English norms.

Rather than challenge the inherent supremacist approach of disregarding the acquired language of students, Lemov reinforces the use of what he deems the “language of opportunity,” or Standard English ideology, in the techniques described in TLaC 2.0. Lemov suggested that teachers should use an interrogative approach to correcting student language. He noted, “When a student makes a grammatical error, merely repeat the error in an interrogative tone: ‘We was walking down the street?’” (p. 118). If the student does not self-correct, Lemov recommended that the teacher, “begin[s] to rephrase the answer as it would sound if grammatically correct, then allow the student to complete it...that would mean saying, ‘We were ...’ and leaving the student to provide the full correct answer” (p. 118). Both of these strategies focus on correcting, or fixing, the language that a student brings with them to school, resulting in teachers rejecting a central component of student identity.

The utilization of Lemov’s strategies and phrases in the classroom suggests to students that there is a right and wrong way to speak in school. A binary view of language as either correct or incorrect places value on a way of speaking that is perceived to be appropriate for the classroom and college. Language is often a critical piece of one’s identity. Lemov’s techniques

suggest that students must alter the way they speak to have their ideas conveyed in a valuable way. By doing so, Lemov devalues a part of student identity and sense of belonging in school. A message is conveyed to students through a deficit-oriented lens that they must change the way that they speak in order to be recognized in the classroom. And by advising teachers to publicly correct the way that students speak, Lemov devalues the acquired language of individuals and, moreover, the cultural identity of students.

So as not to overtly place judgment on student language, Lemov used college preparedness as his argument to correct student language that does not meet Standard English ideological expectations. In describing the hesitation of some teachers to correct student language he noted:

Still, many teachers worry that their corrections implicitly say, “You can’t use that language because it’s not good enough.” They don’t want to engage in such a conversation, nor appear negative or disparaging... You might say, “If you think that the way I speak in the classroom is the same as the way I speak when I’m out with friends, you’re wrong. We all speak differently in different settings, but when we’re in class, we’ll all speak the language of college.” Once that rationale is established, champion teachers reinforce the fact that Format Matters. No matter what you tell your students about how they speak elsewhere, making the determination to prepare them to compete for jobs and seats in college by asking them to self-correct in class is one of the fastest ways to help them. (Lemov, 2015, p. 118)

Lemov’s justification for correcting student language could be perceived as necessary for the development of student college readiness. However, by determining that students must reject a culturally acquired form of speaking in order to compete in college, Lemov perpetuates White supremacist values. Similarly, Lemov advised champion teachers to ask the question, “Who can tell me like a scholar?” to prompt students to self-correct when using language that does not align to Standard English ideology (p. 119). These techniques and suggested phrases use college and scholastic normativity rooted in White supremacy convention to defend the stigmatization of

student language that does not match Standard English principles. This deficit view of nonstandard English described in TLaC 2.0 also conveys to teachers that they are helping support or fix, students by assimilating students to utilize a language that will purportedly meet the expectations of college.

Turning Students Into Scholars

In his introduction, Lemov utilized language that analogizes teachers to craftsmen and artists, suggesting that the role of the teacher is to alter, craft, or fix their subjects. Lemov claimed, “There *is* a tool box for closing achievement gaps, it turns out” (p. 3). He described these tools as effective in fixing the gap in achievement between “urban,” “inner-city” schools and wealthier school districts (pp. 2, 10). Similarly, Lemov argued that the effects of poverty require tools for fixing:

Teachers [in impoverished schools] often work in a crucible where our society’s failures are paramount and self-evident, and sometimes seem nearly overwhelming. Still, every day in every neighborhood on the near or the far edge of hope, there are teachers who without much fanfare take the students who others say “can’t”—can’t read great literature, can’t do algebra or calculus, can’t and don’t want to learn—and turn them into scholars who can. (pp. 1-2)

Lemov assumes a deficit-based perspective of Black and Latinx students—coded as students in urban and inner-city schools—through the utilization of strategies that encourage teachers to fix perceived student deficits. Through strategies that promote classroom standardization, systemization, efficiency, and productivity, Lemov claimed that his TLaC 2.0 techniques could remedy student deficiencies, ultimately turning students into scholars.

Deficiency generalizations are made about students in TLaC 2.0. These generalizations inform a focus on standardization to correct the student shortcomings that Lemov identifies. He asserted that there are “endemic problems” in urban schools, meaning problems that can be

predicted and are likely occur in the classroom. Lemov explained that the 2.0 version of *Teach Like a Champion* was developed in response to endemic questions such as, “What do you do when a student gives up and simply won’t try?” and “What do you do when you ask a student to sit down, and he smirks and tells you to sit down?” (p. 6). These deficit generalizations under the assumption of predictable endemic problems make student standardization an easy fix for Lemov to treat the perceived problems of students. Lemov’s approach follows the train of thought that if all students are expected to exhibit predictable areas of deficiencies, then the standardization of student behavior and systemization of the classroom can easily mitigate such problems.

A standard of systemization, order, and efficiency is established with Technique 45, *Threshold*, which sets an expectation for how students are allowed to enter the classroom. Lemov noted that this technique “socializes students to work with discipline, urgency, and efficiency as soon as they walk through the door” (p. 367). *Threshold* requires students to shake the teacher’s hand in a standardized manner while using a greeting deemed appropriate by the teacher. As previously noted, Lemov’s techniques expect students to utilize language that aligns to Standard English ideological principles. *Threshold* suggests to students that they need to alter components of their identity before entering the classroom. Further, the technique implies that teachers must standardize and correct student behavior students even before the school day begins. Lemov assumes from his predicted endemic questions that students lack the ability to autonomously enter the classroom, and require fixing through standardization and uniformity.

Lemov encourages the implementation of the *Threshold* technique because it sets an expectation that student deviations from what is standardized in the classroom will immediately be corrected. In describing the technique Lemov maintained, “[Teachers] should also use

Threshold to set expectations by correcting weak handshakes, untidy attire, apathetic or sarcastic greetings, or poor eye contact...Get it wrong, and you go back in the line and try it again,” (pp. 353-354). First, Lemov assumes a deficit-based perspective of the appearance, acquired language, and nonverbal communication of students, and uses *Threshold* as an approach to fixing and aligning students to White-dominant ideology. Second, Lemov’s strategy conveys a message to students to that they are not welcome in the classroom unless they assimilate to standards perpetuated White supremacy. Consequently, to enter the classroom a student must comply with the expectations of standardization, or self-correct behavior that the teacher deems as inadequate for the classroom.

Lemov shared an example of an exemplary champion teacher utilizing *Threshold* in her classroom to reinforce the expectation of standardization. Lemov detailed her use of the technique, specifically her response to a student when he did not meet her expectations of standardization:

When one student greets her with an informal, “Hey, what up?” she responds with warmth, “‘What up’ is not appropriate,” gently holding his hand as he passes and directing him to the back of the line. A few seconds later, he greets her with a “Good morning” and, without retribution, she nods: “Good morning, Jabali.” (pp. 354-355)

While Lemov colored this encounter in seemingly warm and non-judgmental light, the teacher sends Jabali a clear message that he is not welcome into the classroom unless he assimilates his speech to Standard English ideology. Moreover, Jabali was penalized for not meeting the expectations of standardization and asked to rehearse the greeting again to gain access to the classroom.

Rehearsal is a prevalent theme throughout TLaC 2.0 to standardize student language and behavior. Lemov declared rehearsal as the means to standardize success and a necessary strategy

to reinforce standardization “until excellence becomes habitual” (p. 349). Technique 50, *Do It Again*, is one strategy suggested by Lemov that reinforces the standardization of students. He noted, “When there is an established expectation—a way that things are supposed to be done—doing it again and doing it right or better or perfectly is often the most powerful response” (p. 373). Thus, teachers define expectations that fix the perceived deficiencies of students through routines and systems, and students are expected to execute those routines with perfection. If students do not meet the standards of excellence, then they are required to rehearse the routine, procedure, or expectation until perfection is achieved.

Do It Again reinforces the development of classroom—or “scholarly”—standards to mitigate perceived student deficits. In developing behavioral expectations that are standardized for all students, teachers are able to swiftly correct students who deviate from classroom norms. For example, Lemov asserted if “one or two students talk while everyone is lining up, [then] they all try it again” (p. 374). Consequently, if one student does not meet the expectations of the teacher, the entire class is required to rehearse the procedure again. Lemov noted that not only does this approach correct, or standardize, the behavior of the individual student, but it also allows for the rest of the class to repeatedly rehearse success. While Lemov does address certain classroom situations in which whole group correction may not be productive, he does largely advocate for repetition to foster assimilation through peer-to-peer accountability.

An additional technique that encourages rehearsal is Technique 11, *No Opt Out*. This technique is designed in response to the assumed endemic problem that students will claim that they do not know the answer to a question in order to avoid answering the question at all. The technique is also based on the deficit-rooted assumption that students will find ways to dodge

answering difficult questions. The *No Opt Out* process begins with a student who does not answer a question when asked by the teacher. The teacher then asks another student in the classroom the same question. After the second student responds with the correct answer, the teacher goes back to the original student and asks the same question with the expectation that the student will repeat the correct answer. Subsequently, Lemov explained that classrooms that implement *No Opt Out* standardize correctness and succeed “by ensuring that students who won’t try or can’t answer practice getting it right” (pp. 80-90).

In the following scenario, Lemov described a hypothetical situation in which a teacher would be advised to utilize the *No Opt Out* technique:

You ask Charlie what three times eight is. Charlie mutters “I dunno” under his breath, then gives you a look full of sharp things, rolls his eyes, and turns away. It’s a critical moment. Students all too commonly use this approach to push back on teachers when their unwillingness to try, lack of knowledge, or a combination of the two makes them unsure or resistant. (p. 91)

Noted first from this passage is the deficit-based language and assumptions regarding student will, knowledge, and behavior. The student is characterized as defiant when, in fact, the student may simply not know the answer to the question. Lemov’s suggestion to remedy the perceived defiance or unwillingness on behalf of the student is to have the student repeat, or rehearse, the correct answer. Moreover, the *No Opt Out* approach uses rehearsal to fix student defiance, and standardize correctness through repetition.

In addition to *No Opt Out*, Lemov encourages the standardization of students through Technique 34, *Call and Response*, in which the teacher prompts his or her students to respond in unison. The *Call and Response* technique remedies the deficit-based assumption that students are not engaged in school and, consequently, must be standardized to alter student engagement

levels. In order to standardize student engagement, Lemov asserted that teachers must cue all students to respond “energetically” and “enthusiastically” throughout a lesson. It is expected that 100% of students participate in *Call and Response* to “[make] lessons feel energetic and positive” (p. 262). Rather than acknowledge the role of the teacher in developing lessons that appeal to the interests of students, TLaC 2.0 indicates that learners should be enthusiastic and engaged regardless of content or teacher efficacy. Therefore, Lemov’s method to fix what is seen as a lack of student engagement, is through the standardization of cued student response.

The façade of standardized energy and engagement is also undergirded by the standardization of compliance. Lemov asserted that behavioral standardization is an additional component of the *Call and Response* technique that makes the strategy essential for the classroom. He maintained, “There’s a hidden benefit to Call and Response: students respond to a prompt as a group, exactly on cue, over and over again. Everyone sees everyone else doing just what the teacher asked, usually with spirit and happiness” (p. 263). A core principle of *Call and Response* is the “100 percent participation rule” (p. 264) which requires all students to respond in unison. If there are students who do not respond on cue, the teacher repeats, or rehearses, the cue again until all students enthusiastically respond. As a result, teachers correct, or fix, student engagement levels by standardizing and systemizing compliance in the classroom, further perpetuating the assumption that students have to be fixed in order to become scholarly.

Compliance and Adherence to Authority

Consistent among the techniques outlined in TLaC 2.0 is the expressed critical need for teachers to reinforce student compliance and adherence to authority. In describing the TLaC 2.0 classroom, Lemov maintained, “what champion classrooms all have in common is 100 percent

compliance” (p. 420). Strategies that promote universal compliance and obedience advance the assumption that students lack respect and discipline, in addition to the ability to self-regulate their behavior. The techniques also suggest that teachers ought to make immediate corrections through consequences and other forms of discipline when the classroom deviates from 100 percent compliance. Lemov’s strategies convey a clear message to students that there are distinct power differentials in the classroom. Further, he offers techniques for teachers that strengthen their ability to be seen as an authoritative-figures and amplify their command of the classroom. TLaC 2.0 encourages the utilization of visible student compliance expectations, discipline through consequences, and authority-enhancing strategies for teachers to remedy the deficit-based belief that students lack self-regulation and respect for others.

Technique 52, *Make Compliance Visible*, is one of many strategies that Lemov suggests in TLaC 2.0 to ensure students consistently obey the educator in the classroom. Specifically, Lemov described *Make Compliance Visible* as a highly effective technique that when implemented “[upholds] the standard of compliance” in the classroom (p. 293). This technique instructs teachers to give directions to students that require visible, observable action on behalf of the student. Subsequently, educators are able to quickly identify students who do not comply with the directions, and correct the perceived disobedient behavior immediately in public. In doing so, Lemov noted that teachers are able to set a tone and create an expectation in the classroom that marginal compliance is not acceptable. Speedy, immediate compliance is expected or else students risk the potential of a public consequence or correction from the teacher.

Lemov's explanation for rejecting "marginal compliance" in the classroom assumes that students who do not act with quickness or speed, or do not meet the standardized behavioral expectations of the teacher, are likely to be lazy or lack will and urgency. Additionally, students are perceived to be defiant to authority figures. He noted, "Students are exhibiting 'marginal compliance' when they do the minimum possible to comply with your request. When they do this, they are implicitly asking, 'Is this enough?' or 'Will you settle for that?'" (pp. 393-394). Lemov continues by justifying that in order to eradicate "marginal compliance" in the classroom, an immediate correction must be made when students do not quickly and visibly follow directives. He explained to his readers that the instant consequences that result from unhurried, or marginal, compliance "shows students that I am confident in my authority and believe that they can and will do what I've asked" (pp. 219-20). Subsequently, the teacher further reinforces the distinct power differentials in the classroom and upholds the standard of compliance in schooling.

TLaC 2.0 expresses a goal of not only upholding a standard of compliance, but also normalizing compliance for students. Deficit-based assumptions of unruly and disobedient students advance Lemov's argument that universal compliance is necessary to control classroom behaviors. Even basic functions such as hand-raising become controlled and teachers are encouraged to seek out indications of non-compliant students in need of correction, or fixing. In a scenario that illustrated the normalization of compliance in the classroom, Lemov described the need to regulate and correct even the smallest deviations from standardized expectations:

You ask for "scholarly hands," meaning hands raised straight and all the way up, and a student raises a hand partially: Is this OK? These moments are worth anticipating and enforcing. If you don't enforce marginal compliance, you risk undercutting the veracity of your expectations more broadly. (pp. 393-394)

Not only does Lemov suggest that there is a defined approach to hand-raising that is considered scholarly—likely influenced by White-dominant ideology—but he also encourages teachers to police and correct any indication of non-complaint behavior. Thus, Lemov defines champion teachers as those who demand student obedience through regulation and correction.

Advancing the deficit-based assumption that students lack respect and discipline, Lemov encourages teachers to increase their authority through the enforcement of compliance. He also offers additional techniques to affirm the authority of the teacher in the classroom. Technique 56, *Strong Voice*, asserts teacher authority in the classroom by utilizing intentional verbal and nonverbal strategies that position the teacher as an authoritative figure. *Strong Voice* is intended to support teachers in their ability to “command the room” (p. 413) and, subsequently, increase their authority and power in the classroom. Implementation of the technique requires an authoritative verbal presence using a “formal register” characterized as a teacher’s no-nonsense voice that reinforces formality in the classroom. Lemov also suggested striking a formal pose and waiting to speak until all students are silent to affirm the teacher’s authority and control. He maintained, “controlling who has the floor is the mark [teacher] your authority and a necessity to [teaching]” (p. 415).

In addition to increasing teacher authority, Lemov also advocates for the use of strategies that maintain power and authority over the classroom. The incorporation of such strategies in TLac 2.0 suggests the deficit-based assumption that students will actively choose to challenge the authority of teachers. Moreover, Lemov assumes that educators will need to implement these strategies to protect their power and safeguard their authority from students. He argued the importance of acting “clearly and decisively in the face of a challenge to [teacher] authority” (pp.

417-418). Students who do not comply when given directives are viewed as challenging authority and tagged as defiant. Lemov maintained that teachers preserve their authority from defiant student behavior by giving corrections and consequences to students.

Technique 55, *Art of the Consequence*, details how and when to give consequences or make corrections to uphold teacher authority. Lemov noted that when deciding between making a correction or giving a consequence, a teacher should make a correction first to exert authority and “[communicate] confidence because it shows others that you don't need a consequence to achieve compliance” (p. 411). He continues explaining that if a student persistently behaves defiantly, the teacher should immediately give a consequence to uphold their authority. Lemov explained, “Tolerating willful defiance corrodes your authority in the eyes of the student as well as the rest of the class” (p. 411). Therefore, to maintain authority and power over the classroom, Lemov asserts that corrections and consequences must be an integral component to teacher pedagogy. This technique ultimately normalizes obedient behavior and further reinforces unequal power relations in the classroom.

Surveillance and Control

The most prevalent theme identified from the analysis of TLaC 2.0 taxonomy is the use of surveillance and control to manage student behavior and cognition. Similar to the theme of Compliance and Adherence to Authority, Surveillance and Control suggest a deficit-based assumption that students are unruly, untrustworthy, and unwilling or unable to actively participate in the advancement of their knowledge. Subsequently, Lemov maintained that students must be monitored, regulated, and disciplined in order to increase their academic outcomes. In fact, Lemov overtly declared the use of control as an essential component to

champion teacher pedagogy. He explained, “Getting comfortable with the need to exert benign control is part of a teacher's preparation for success. Many of the techniques in this book support control” (p. 340). Through the implementation of techniques that promote control, surveillance, and discipline in the classroom, Lemov claimed that teachers can fix student deficits, and develop a culture of scholarly behavior and success.

Many of Lemov’s beginning techniques encourage a variation of surveillance. Technique 4, *Tracking, Not Watching*, is one of Lemov’s first techniques that openly promoted surveilling student cognition. Lemov maintained, “Tracking Not Watching means deciding specifically what you're looking for and remaining disciplined about it in the face of a thousand distractions” (p. 45). He suggested that teachers should track specific error and success points of students to “distinguish excellence from completion” (p. 46). While observing student performance is undoubtedly an important component of teaching, *Tracking, Not Watching* suggests that student cognition requires intense monitoring in order for students to reach successful measures of mastery. The technique also implies that an autonomous learning environment is not adequate for the students intended to be on the recipient end of the TLaC 2.0 strategies.

Similar to *Tracking, Not Watching*, TLaC 2.0’s Technique 6, named *Affirmative Checking*, promotes consistent monitoring of student performance. Lemov described *Affirmative Checking* as a technique that allows teachers to remain constantly aware of student cognition and behavior. The technique encourages teachers to include specific checkpoints throughout their lessons to ensure student work products meet the standardized format and correctness determined by the teacher. Student work must be “checked” for correctness and standardization at multiple points, suggesting the deficit-perception that students must be regulated in order to succeed

academically. In fact, Lemov noted that checkpoints should occur as many times as possible throughout a lesson. He also advocated for appointing a student as a “checker” to monitor the work of other students (p. 54). As a result, *Affirmative Checking* not only nurtures teacher behavior that promotes the policing of student standardization, but the technique also emboldens students to surveil one another.

In addition to promoting the surveillance of student cognition, Lemov also highly encourages surveilling student behavior to maintain order and control in the classroom. Technique 24, *Circulate*, is a strategy noted throughout during multiple sections of the TLaC 2.0 text which Lemov claims to eliminate behavioral problems in the classroom. The *Circulate* technique consists of strategic proximity and positioning of the body to foster student accountability and compliance. Lemov offers variations of circulation, such as the *Simple Walk-By* in which the teacher slowly walks by a student’s desk to “show that [the teacher] is monitoring what she’s doing” (p. 105). Likewise, an additional variation of *Circulate* called *Position for Power* encourages teachers to place themselves in “the most powerful position to be in with another person...where you can see him, he knows you can see him, and he can't see you” (p. 187).

The *Position for Power* variation of *Circulate* not only promotes surveillance, but also advances the assumption that teachers need to maintain power and control over student behavior. Lemov encourages the use of control as a means of advancing the academic outcomes of students. He explained:

Standing just over a student's shoulder as you peruse his work or standing at the back of the classroom as a class discusses a topic builds subtle but pervasive control of the classroom environment in order to focus it on learning. (Lemov, 2018, p. 187)

While Lemov claimed that control is a necessary measure to increase levels of student learning, the technique also implies that teachers must use intimidation techniques to reach universal student compliance. Strategies such as assuming a threatening stance or positioning the body in a stance that conveys power ultimately are used to promote surveillance and control of student behavior.

As previously discussed, the use of control over student behavior is a strategy Lemov overtly champions in TLaC 2.0. Lemov asserted that exerting control over student behavior is inherently the “right thing to do” because educators are able to get students to consistently “work hard and value learning, and respect their peers” (p. 340). It is important to note that Lemov does claim that he does not believe his promotion of control suggests that students lack agency. Rather, he argued, “Controlling merely involves asking in a way that makes [students] more likely to agree,” or comply, with what the teacher asks (p. 340). Although Lemov does express his belief that control does not imply a deficit-based perspective of student agency, the sentiment is not reflected in the techniques and strategies described throughout TLaC 2.0.

Many of Lemov’s techniques use control as the means to maintain student engagement. For example, Technique 23, *Control the Game*, is a strategy with the described purpose of controlling student engagement by ensuring students remain engaged in reading activities. Strategies, such as unpredictability calling on students to read aloud, are encouraged to proactively detect students who are not engaged and increase the incentive to stay focused. Similarly, *Hands Down Cold Calling* requires all students remain ready to be unpredictably called on to answer a question, regardless of if they would have initially raised their hand or not. Lemov asserted that this technique “sends a very clear message about [a teacher’s] firm control

of the classroom and students' accountability for remaining attentive" (p. 256). Subsequently, Lemov's techniques place value on the appearance of student engagement which is controlled by intimidation and anxiety provoking unpredictability.

The appearance of engagement and compliance through methods of control are reinforced further through Technique 49, *Number the Steps*. This technique promotes point-to-point movement, encouraging teachers to police students' bodies and militarizing student movement. *Number the Steps* promotes breaking student movement into precise actions that can be monitored and controlled by teachers. For example, in describing a student transition from desks to the carpet Lemov encouraged the use of announcements such as the following: "When I say 'one,' please stand and push in your chairs. When I say 'two,' please turn to face the door. When I say 'three,' please follow your line leader to the place to line up" (p. 366). He explained that the stopping points inserted between each chunked direction allow the teacher to make corrections to incorrect student movements and further, "control the pace with more precision" p. 366.

The militarization of student behavior, use of intimidation tactics, and encouragement of unpredictability also support educators in manipulating students into feeling powerless in the classroom. A variation of Technique 56, called *Exude Quiet Power*, promotes the use of a quiet, slowed voice in moments of confrontation with students in order to protect the teacher's appearance of control and power over the classroom. Lemov described the technique as critical in maintaining control. He explained:

When you get loud and talk fast, you show that you are nervous, scared, and out of control. You make your anxiety visible and send a message that students can control you and your emotions by making you anxious and upset. When you get loud, you also make

the room louder and thus make it easier for students to successfully talk under their breath. (p. 414)

Lemov argued that teachers should always position themselves as in control, and ensure that students are aware of their lack thereof. Techniques such as *Exude Quiet Power* make certain that Lemov's champion teachers harness their control over students and use explicit strategies that uphold power.

In addition to voice, Lemov also encourages teachers to use their bodies in an intimidating—and sometimes threatening—manner to maintain a high level of control over the classroom. One example, *Move Systematically*, a variation of *Circulate*, not only promotes surveillance through constantly being “aware of what’s happening everywhere,” (p. 186) but also advocates for using movements and body language to convey absolute control over student behavior. The technique involves approaching students identified as in need of correction, and using a circuitous walking route to show that the teacher is alertly watching and is in ultimate control. Lemov noted that taking a circuitous route to a noncompliant student ensures that the student will not feel as though they are able to control the teacher. Subsequently, a deficit perspective of students as untrustworthy and unruly is suggested by assuming students will misbehave or attempt to dismantle teacher authority if given autonomy.

Similarly, an additional variation of *Circulate*, called *Break the Plane*, encourages teachers to use unpredictable body movements and positioning to maintain control. Lemov claimed that champion teachers may “subtly raise [their] eyebrows at one student as [they] ask an intriguing question or place a warm and gentle hand on the shoulder of another as [they] progress around the room” (pp. 183-184) to accentuate their control. And while “warm” and “gentle” are used to describe the teacher’s body language, the described body gestures and

physical touch used while towering over student communicates ultimate power and control—especially when used unpredictably and in pursuit of making corrections to student behavior. Consequently, above-mentioned TLaC 2.0 techniques suggest that surveillance and domination are necessary components of a successful classroom due to the deficit perspective promoted by Lemov that students will abuse autonomy.

CHAPTER FOUR

CONCLUSION

Discussion

This study aimed to examine evidence of a racialized deficit ideology within Lemov's *Teach Like a Champion 2.0: 62 Techniques That Put Students on the Path to College*. The study's findings, as informed by the overarching research questions and theoretical framework, resulted in the identification of four themes: 1. Assimilation to White Culture, 2. Turning Students Into Scholars, 3. Compliance and Adherence to Authority, and 4. Surveillance and Control. The findings revealed evidence of racially coded language and terminology that attributes deficient characteristics to students of Color. Moreover, the results from this research provided evidence of language that promotes dominant ideology, further preserving White supremacy within schooling. A comprehensive examination and analysis of TLaC 2.0 produced data that confirmed Lemov's use of racially coded language, taxonomy rooted in cultural deficiency, and terminology that perpetuates dominant ideology.

Although Lemov did not overtly reference race within TLaC 2.0, his justification for the techniques in relation to closing the achievement gap provided distinct evidence of coded language. How do we know Lemov was talking about black and brown students? Lemov's use of hidden language—utilizing words such as “urban”, “inner-city” and, “impoverished”—allowed him to promote techniques that target perceived racial deficiencies without actually referencing Black or Latinx students. Given the composition of the teaching force and growing diversity of

the American classroom, avoidance of discussions regarding race becomes increasingly problematic in the development of critical educators. Lemov's avoidance of race-based language further maintains the silencing of race within educator discourse and pre-service teacher development. Thus, Lemov is able to promote his pedagogy and race-based techniques under the guise of closing the achievement gap and fixing the effects of poverty without acknowledging the effects of structural racism.

Lemov's use of coded language allowed him to make assumptions about race throughout the TLaC 2.0 text without using language that could color his remarks as racist. Specifically, Lemov's techniques used language to suggest the need to fix student deficiencies by using tools that support standardization, socialization, control, and surveillance. Most notably, data revealed Lemov's negative assumptions about behavior and language commonly expressed within the Black and Latinx. He characterized behavior and language as deficit by describing them as both unscholarly and an impediment to classroom culture. Through the TLaC 2.0 text, Lemov promoted the assumption that academic disparities between White students and students of Color can be remedied by altering, or fixing, perceived student deficiencies. Further, by encouraging "champion" teachers to advance student outcomes by rejecting components of a student's cultural identity, negative assertions were made about students of Color and their ability to succeed in the classroom based upon their race.

In addition to promoting deficit-base assumptions about students of Color, findings from this study also indicated that Lemov's strategies focus on fixing perceived student deficits by aligning student behavior with White normative practices. Most striking from this study's analysis was Lemov's clear judgments on language, placing a high value of importance on

promoting Standard English ideology. Lemov advances White supremacy in the classroom by requiring students to communicate using “better language” and what he referred to as the “language of college”. Likewise, dominant ideology and White supremacy are advanced by Lemov’s techniques which advocate for the socialization and assimilation of certain student behaviors. Behavior coded by Lemov as “scholarly”—including clasped hands, nodding heads, direct eye contact, and an erect posture—maintain White supremacist values in schooling by defining correct and incorrect scholarly behaviors. Further, Lemov’s perpetuation of a deficit narrative within the TLaC 2.0 text and reinforcement of dominant ideology implies that the academic outcomes of Black and Latinx students are only advanced when behavior and language are corrected to be in alignment with White hegemonic norms.

Limitations

This study was developed to increase the understanding of deficit ideology within instructional pedagogy used to train teachers. Despite taking several precautions to ensure the credibility of this research, there were limitations which potentially impacted the validity and generalizability of the research findings. First, there were clear limitations to the study’s overall design and methodology. Although this study ensured steps were taken to examine the authenticity and accuracy of the TLaC 2.0 document, a primary limitation of the research resulted from the development and general intent of the TLaC 2.0 text. The intended audience of Lemov’s TLaC 2.0 is educators, administrators, and school districts. Consequently, TLaC 2.0 was not designed specifically for educational research purposes. Given the nature of the TLaC 2.0 text development, there is the potential that this study may have led to incomplete or fragmented findings (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Subsequently, the findings of the study could be

perceived as disjointed—or possibly even deviate—from the framework and purpose of the study as a result of the inability to probe or ask follow-up questions in relation to the study’s overarching research question.

Additionally, an evident limitation of the study results from researcher positionality and the personal biases of the investigator. Merriam and Tisdell (2016) explained, “Since the investigator is the primary instrument for gathering data, he or she relies on skills and intuition to find and interpret data from documents” (p. 175). Consequently, researcher bias and positionality could have affected the interpretation of the data and, further, the overall transferability of the study’s findings. Although document analysis provided the opportunity to work with non-reactive data, researcher proximity and background may have affected the ways in which the data was collected and analyzed. Journaling methods were used to mitigate personal biases throughout the research process, however, document analysis requires the researcher to act as the primary instrument which may result in biased data interpretations. And though this study provided rich, descriptive data on the topic, further research is necessary given the limited scope of this research in addition to its limitations in transferability and generalizability.

Implications

The cultural mismatch between teachers and students, in combination with limited race-based discourse in teacher preparation programs, results in the continuation of students being overlooked because of their skin color. Instructional guides and pedagogical techniques that aim to close the achievement gap become increasingly problematic as structural racism is left unaddressed, and educators remain unequipped to interrogate deficit ideology in addition to their own Whiteness. There is, however, a growing movement of critical educators, researchers, and

higher-education professionals focused on increasing the preparedness of teachers as culturally responsive educators. As teacher training and preparation programs increase the centrality of culturally responsive education and pedagogy in their programs, Lemov's following of educators and TLaC 2.0's prevalence within schools may see a stark decline. This study helped illuminate the hidden racialized and deficit-based assumptions underscored in Lemov's work. As a result, the findings of this study may help inform the development of culturally responsive pedagogy within teacher education, shed light on the future of TLaC 2.0's and its prevalence in educator training, and influence possible considerations for subsequent educational research.

Teacher preparation programs are in urgent need of instruction and training that develops the critical competencies of educators. While many university programs have taken steps to integrate CRP practices and multicultural education principles into their curriculum for future teachers, there remains a lack of preparedness of White educators in navigating the diverse classroom and ability to challenge racist practices. Even more apparent in alternative teacher certification programs is a focus on closing the achievement gap without the acknowledgment of institutional and structural racism. Within such programs, there is minimal discourse regarding race beyond the recognition that a gap in standardized testing scores exists between minority and White students. This research suggests that there is a need to accelerate the incorporation of critical race education within teacher preparation programs and, by the same token, examine the pedagogical techniques that are used to train teachers for the classroom. By developing the awareness of educators regarding race deficit ideology teachers are better suited to challenge the practices such as those within TLaC 2.0 that may promote deficit-based assumptions and have negative implications for students.

In conjunction with an increased focus on critical education and CRP practices, the findings from this study also support increased teacher identity development in teacher preparation programs. Specifically, White pre-service teachers could greatly benefit from curricula and coursework that helps in understanding their own Whiteness and, further, challenge race and deficit-based assumptions. A heightened awareness of Whiteness within teacher preparation programs could assist White educators in confronting personal biases, while also positioning teachers to interrogate deficit ideology and the perpetuation of dominant culture in schooling. Likewise, a developed understanding of Whiteness could better equip teachers to implement and integrate CRP practices effectively. To challenge White supremacy and the maintenance of cultural hegemony, educators need to ability to evaluate their Whiteness, privilege, and power. Such additions to teacher training programs could prepare educators to better serve students of Color.

As educators and teacher preparation programs begin to acknowledge and understand the ways in which they perpetuate dominant ideology, the prevalence of TLaC 2.0 within teacher training may diminish. Lemov's techniques are likely to face scrutiny in a future in which teacher training programs include cultural responsiveness and critical education as core components of their curricula. This study uncovered evidence of a racialized deficit ideology within TLaC 2.0 that could prompt further research in the examination of racist and White supremacist values within Lemov's text. Added research investigating racialized elements of Lemov's work—such as how the encouragement of student obedience and surveillance could promote prison culture and the school-to-prison pipeline—could propel teacher preparation programs to abandon many of Lemov's practices. Subsequently, there may not be a place for

TLaC 2.0 techniques within teacher education programs that continue to advance equity through a focus on critical pedagogy.

This research provided a single analysis of racialized deficit-ideology perpetuated through an instructional guide for teachers. Given the limited nature of this study, further research into other facets of Lemov's work could offer additional insight regarding the implications and effects of his techniques on both students and teachers. For example, an analysis of White and minority pre-service teacher perceptions of TLaC 2.0 techniques could help inform teacher preparation curricula development. Additionally, an examination of other teacher training guides that aim to close the achievement gap could provide further evidence to make broader generalizations about race-based deficit ideology and similar instructional programs. For instance, an investigation of Lee Cantor's *Assertive Discipline* through a CRT lens could help build upon the findings from this research. Although this study only provides initial data to begin considering this topic, additional research is necessary to develop a more comprehensive understanding of the perpetuation of deficit ideology within teacher preparation programs and educator training.

Conclusion

All students deserve teachers who not only recognize their strengths, but also build upon their assets to increase long-term outcomes and opportunities. Delpit (2006) asserted "If we are to successfully educate all of our children, we must work to remove the blinders built of stereotypes, monocultural instructional methodologies, ignorance, social distance, biased research, and racism" (p. 182). In order to remove those blinders, it is imperative to examine the language used to message instructional practices intended to close the achievement gap and

consider how educators and future teachers are prepared to teach in the diverse classroom. As achievement gap discourse continues to emphasize perceived cultural deficiencies, it is crucial to re-examine the development of teachers as critical educators. Further, it is important for teacher preparation programs to consider how they are preparing educators to understand their Whiteness, power, and privilege as it relates to pedagogy and the integration of critical education practices.

Teacher training and professional development programs play an essential role in developing an educational system that provides equitable opportunities for all students. This research broadens the current understanding of marketed instructional guides that claim to target the achievement gap. The findings of this study offered one example of a racialized deficit ideology perpetuated within instruction guides used by teacher education and professional development programs. An analysis of Lemov's TLaC 2.0 instructional techniques revealed coded racialized language and deficit-based assumptions which perpetuate within teacher training programs. As a result of these findings, it is imperative that teacher preparation programs reconsider the techniques and guides used to train teachers and also examine opportunities to increase the cultural competencies and identity-awareness of educators. This type of critical analysis is necessary to disrupt the deficit narrative and perpetuation of dominant ideology within educator training and schooling, and, in turn, provide a more equitable education for students of Color.

APPENDIX A
DOCUMENT ANALYSIS PROTOCOL

Appendix A: Document Analysis Protocol

Content Analysis		
Investigator: Kayla Stewart Valenti		
Name of Document: Teach Like a Champion 2.0		
Part 1: <i>Check for Understanding</i> Date of Analysis:	Initial Codes:	Patterns/Recurring Codes:
Part 2: <i>Academic Ethos</i> Date of Analysis:	Initial Codes:	Patterns/Recurring Codes:
Part 3: <i>Ratio</i> Date of Analysis:	Initial Codes:	Patterns/Recurring Codes:
Part 4: <i>Behavior and Culture</i> Date of Analysis:	Initial Codes:	Patterns/Recurring Codes:

Thematic Analysis		
Patterns Date of Analysis:	Categories Date of Analysis:	Finalized Themes Date of Analysis:

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